Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 to 13. (Canceled).

14. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal combustion engine, comprising:

determining an ambient pressure via an ambient pressure sensor;

determining a pressure in an intake manifold of the internal combustion engine via an intake manifold pressure sensor;

obtaining a starting value via the intake manifold pressure sensor before a starting process of the internal combustion engine; and

checking a reliability performance of the ambient pressure sensor by comparing the ambient pressure to the starting value,

wherein the comparison is only performed if a preceding check of the intake manifold pressure sensor yields a result that the intake manifold pressure sensor is operational.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the result of the check of the intake manifold pressure sensor only continues to be used, if one or more of the following release conditions are fulfilled:

i) an ignition of the internal combustion engine has just been turned on;

ii) the starting process of the internal combustion engine has been triggered;

iii) an actual speed of the internal combustion engine is within a desired speed range;

iv) a throttle valve of the internal combustion engine is opened no wider than a maximum throttle valve angle; and

v) the starting process has not yet exceeded a prescribed duration.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the check of the intake manifold pressure sensor includes:

detecting the starting value via the intake manifold pressure sensor before the starting process of the internal combustion engine;

storing the starting value;

after the starting process, comparing the starting value to the pressure in the intake manifold; and

recognizing the intake manifold pressure sensor as operational, if a difference of the starting value and the pressure in the intake manifold exceeds a minimum value.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the comparison of the ambient pressure to the starting value is only performed if one or more of the following release conditions are fulfilled:

i) an ignition of the internal combustion engine has just been switched on;

ii) the starting process has been triggered;

iii) the check of the intake manifold pressure sensor has been performed; and

iv) the intake manifold pressure sensor is operational.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein a check of the ambient pressure sensor includes:

one of detecting and triggering the starting process of the internal combustion engine;

one of before and during the starting process, storing the intake manifold pressure detected by the intake manifold pressure sensor as the starting value;

comparing the stored starting value to the ambient pressure obtained from the ambient pressure sensor; and

recognizing the ambient pressure sensor as operational, if the difference of the starting value and the ambient pressure does not exceed a maximum value.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising:

detecting a malfunction of the ambient pressure sensor when the stored starting value is used as the ambient pressure.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein one of in addition to and alternatively to obtaining the starting value from the intake manifold pressure sensor and storing the starting value, the starting value is obtained from a charge-air pressure sensor and stored before the starting process is used.

21. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal combustion engine, comprising:

providing a pressure sensor in contact with an environment before a starting process of the internal combustion engine;

determining a corresponding pressure via the pressure sensor;

determining a pressure in an intake manifold of the internal combustion engine via an intake manifold pressure sensor; and

checking a reliability performance of the pressure sensor by comparing the pressure determined by the pressure sensor to a starting value that is obtained by the intake manifold pressure sensor before the starting process of the internal combustion engine,

wherein the comparison is only performed if a preceding check of the intake manifold pressure sensor yields the result that the intake manifold pressure sensor is operational.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the pressure sensor includes one of an ambient pressure sensor, a charge air pressure sensor, and an air filter pressure sensor.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for use with a computer, the computer program product having program commands stored on a computer-readable medium for causing the computer to perform ~~performing~~ a method for operating an internal combustion engine, the method comprising:

determining an ambient pressure via an ambient pressure sensor;

determining a pressure in an intake manifold of the internal combustion engine via an intake manifold pressure sensor;

obtaining a starting value via the intake manifold pressure sensor before a starting processing of the internal combustion engine; and

checking a reliability performance of the ambient pressure sensor by comparing the ambient pressure to the starting value,

wherein the comparison is only performed if a preceding check of the intake manifold pressure sensor yields a result that the intake manifold pressure sensor is operational.

24. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the ~~computer program product is stored on~~ computer-readable medium is an electronic storage medium.

25. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the ~~computer program product is stored in~~ computer-readable medium is a flash memory.

26. (Previously Presented) A control unit for an internal combustion engine, comprising:

an ambient pressure sensor to determine an ambient pressure;

an intake manifold pressure sensor to determine a pressure in an intake manifold of the internal combustion engine, the pressure including a starting value determined before a starting process of the internal combustion engine; and

an arrangement to check a reliability performance of the ambient pressure sensor by comparing the ambient pressure to the starting value,

wherein the comparison is only performed if a preceding check of the intake manifold pressure sensor yields the result that the intake manifold pressure sensor is operational.

27. (Previously Presented) An internal combustion engine, comprising:

an ambient pressure sensor to determine an ambient pressure;

an intake manifold;

an intake manifold pressure sensor to determine a pressure in the intake manifold, the intake manifold pressure sensor configured to obtain a starting value before a starting process of the internal combustion engine; and

a control unit to check a reliability performance of the ambient pressure sensor, the control unit configured to compare the ambient pressure to the starting value;

wherein the comparison is only performed if a preceding check of the reliability performance of the intake manifold pressure sensor yields a result that the intake manifold pressure sensor is operational.

28. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine of claim 27, wherein the internal combustion engine is configured for a motor vehicle.